

ABSTRACT

A modular, flexible architecture for offering full-field breast ultrasound (FFBU) functionality and general-purpose ultrasound functionality in a single system is described. A conventional, general-purpose ultrasound system (202) is modified with an FFBU toolkit to create a dual-capability ultrasound system (200), the dual-capability ultrasound system (200) being able to accommodate both general-purpose ultrasound functionality and FFBU functionality, using a single ultrasound engine (112). Among other advantages, real-world clinical environments may enjoy cost savings for initial system procurement, space savings on clinic floors, easier and less expensive system upgrades, and the ability to use a single system and user interface for both FFBU screening and for follow-up diagnosis, biopsy, etc. Among other advantages from an ultrasound manufacturer's perspective are the ability to quickly and/or more easily come to market with an FFBU-related offering by modifying their existing general-purpose ultrasound systems (202) with FFBU toolkits to quickly create dual-capability ultrasound systems (200).

15